Achievement Program's MMR No. 42

Dr. George T. Mellinger
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George Mellinger is a 52-year-old physician (urologist) by profession, although for the last three years he has been in medical administration as Chief of Staff at the veterans Administration Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri. He lives on the hospital grounds with his wife, Betty, and a Heinz "57 varieties" dog, Eva. He is also a Professor of Urology at the University of Kansas, and when not working or model railroading, he carries out research on cancer of the prostrate gland.

"Doc" started his model railroading in 1948, while a resident in urology at Charity Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana. He says that he chose model railroading instead of model airplanes because of lack of space while residing in a hospital room. The HO-gauge "Bayou PomPom and Houma Railroad" began in New Orleans and continued in Cincinnati, Ohio, while George was stationed there. In Minneapolis, Minnesota, the "Rawhide & Bonzana" HOn3 was conceived and built as a semi-portable 4' x 10' layout, currently housed in a bedroom. (Yes, the name is Bonzana because a small daughter's mispronunciation of "Bonanza.") The "Rawhide & Bonzana" exists in a perennial 1898 setting in a particularly lusty area of the West. George is General Manager of the "R&B" and suffers under President Titus Helle and Mr. Durr T. Barstad, the Chairman of the Board. Even the treasurer, Drew P. Drawz, abuses him and refuses to pay his salary. However, with President Helle's permission, George will send a copy of the "History of the Rawhide & Bonzana" to any railroader who requests same. This offer excludes all ladies or railroaders under 21.

Although he enjoys operating on kidneys, he does not have a great interest in operating his railroad, but rather, prefers to build scenery, narrow gauge cars, and buildings of the Old West. Old horses or mule-drawn wagons are a particular favorite, also, river steamboats.

George has been active in NMRA affairs. He wrote "The Whiskey Bend Monthly" column for "The Fusee" of the Thousand Lakes Region, and also published articles in **RAILROAD MODEL CRAFTSMAN**, the **NMRA BULLETIN**, and **MODEL RAILROADER**. He has been Editor of Mid-Continent Region's **CABOOSE KIBITZER**, and is currently a member of the NMRA Periodical Indexing Committee.

His first Achievement Certificate was earned as an Association Official, when President of the Thousand Lakes Region. Since then he has earned the following certificates: Master Builder—tion Volunteer, and Model Railroad Author. George says that his model railroading philosophy boils down to two points: (1) you get out of the hobby what you put into it, and (2) Model Railroading Is **Really** Fun. The day or minute that model railroading stops being fun, he will change to another hobby, but it must be all fun. George has been in the hobby for over 24 years.

The Thousand Lakes Region is now headed by Dr. George T. Mellinger of St. Paul, Minnesota.

Dr. Mellinger is 43 years of age and an urologist at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Minneapolis.

He started his railroading while in residency at Charity Hospital in New Orleans and built the first railroad to ever operate in that hospital after deciding to switch to the hobby of railroading from the hobby of building airplanes.

While living and working in Cincinnati, Dr. Mellinger built his "dream" layout that was 16 by 25 feet but decided, after moving again (this time to Minneapolis) that such a large layout was not practical. He then turned to HOn3 and a smaller layout. The latest move, within the same area, was accomplished with out any ill effects to the railroad. He likes to scratch build and gets plenty out of the 4 by 10 foot layout in HOn3.

Dr. Mellinger joined the NMRA in 1951 but never really became active until moving to the TLR. As soon as he set his bags down, he called George Isaacs (the then TLR Prexy) and said welcome. Those of you who know George, know that the good Doctor was put to work at once and has been enjoying it every since.